
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: SIMMONS
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR CACFP PROVISION THAT COULD RESULT IN \$1.7
MILLION IN FOOD SUBSIDIES TO MISSISSIPPI
DATE: 10/24/00
CC: FILE

Per a phone call from Carol Burnett of DHS' Office for Children and Youth yesterday afternoon, there has been talk in the U.S. Senate of a potential amendment to some appropriation bills that would provide an estimated \$1.7 million in food subsidies to Mississippi childcare facilities to feed children. Burnett suggested that I contact Helen Blank of the Children's Defense Fund for additional info.

According to Blank, there is no bill number assigned to this amendment, but it would be put on the labor, health and human services, and education appropriation bills. The provision would allow for-profit childcare centers that have 25 % of their children eligible for free and reduced price lunch to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP reimburses providers who offer meals and snacks meeting specific nutritional guidelines to low-income children in center-based care. Current law says that 25 % of centers' children must receive Title XX funds to participate.

When passed, Title XX was the major source of childcare funding. It is now the childcare and development block grant. The Department of Agriculture allows states that mix Title XX with other child care funds to participate in CACFP for the benefit of for-profit centers. Mississippi does not take advantage of this provision. As a result, Mississippi's for-profit centers serving poor children cannot benefit from the nutritional meals and snacks offered through CACFP. This proposed amendment/provision would only be for a year, but it would make it much easier for Mississippi to receive these food subsidies. According to Blanks, it would mean approximately \$1.7 million in CACFP benefits for Mississippi's for-profit childcare centers.

Blanks suggested that we contact Senator Cochran's office on this matter. She suggested phoning Cochran's office due to looming appropriation deadlines, but she did provide a draft letter of support should we chose to write his office.

Please advise.

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR CACFP PROVISION THAT COULD RESULT IN \$1.7 MILLION IN FOOD SUBSIDIES TO MISSISSIPPI
DATE: 10/27/00
CC: FILE

There has been talk in the U.S. Senate of a provision in appropriation bills that would provide an estimated \$1.7 million in food subsidies to Mississippi childcare facilities to feed children. The provision would allow for-profit childcare centers that have 25 % of their children eligible for free and reduced price lunch to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP reimburses providers who offer meals and snacks meeting specific nutritional guidelines to low-income children in center-based care. Current law says that 25 % of centers' children must receive Title XX funds to participate.

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Pending your signature, we will fax this letter to Senator Cochran's office.

June 23, 2000

Honorable Thad Cochran
United States Senate
326 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cochran:

I am writing to urge you to support updating the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) so that if 25 percent of children in a for-profit center are eligible for free and reduced price lunch the center can participate in CACFP. Participation in the CACFP ensures that child care providers meet strict USDA guidelines for children's nutrition. This update will help to ensure that low-income children enrolled in for-profit child care centers have access to the nutritional benefits of the CACFP.

Recognizing that a significant number of low-income children were enrolled in for-profit child care centers, Congress amended the CACFP statute in 1981 to allow for-profit providers that had twenty-five percent of their children receiving Title XX funds to participate in the CACFP program. Today, most states no longer use a significant amount of Title XX funds for child care, relying instead on CCDBG and TANF funds. In order to reflect this current reality and provide the support that Congress originally intended for low-income children enrolled in proprietary centers, it is critical that the statute be amended. For-profit centers should be allowed to participate in CACFP if 25 percent of their enrolled children are eligible for fee and reduced price meals.

Updating this provision in the Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill would ensure that a significant number of low-income children enrolled in child care centers in Mississippi would be ensured access to both nutritious meals and supportive child care. It would bring approximately \$1.7 million to the child care centers in our state.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr